



## CHAPTER I.

The Man Who Dared.  
The official starter let his raised arm fall and leaned forward, peering across the blended glare and darkness.

"What?" he shouted, above the pulsating roar of the eleven racing machines lined up before the judges' stand. "What?"

There was a flurry around the central car, whose driver leaned from his seat to stare down at the man who had slipped from beside him to the ground. The great crowd congesting the grandstand pressed closer to the barrier, staring also, commenting and conjecturing.

"The mechanic of the Mercury is off his car!"

"Fainted—"

"Fell—"

"The automobiles hadn't started; he must be sick."

The referee was already pushing his way back, bringing the report from the hastily summoned surgeon.

"Heart disease," he announced right and left. "Stanton's mechanic just dropped off his seat, dead."

But Stanton himself had already swung out of his car, with the energetic decision that marked his every movement.

"My man is out," he tersely stated to the starter. "I've got to run over to my camp and get another. Will you hold the start for me?"

The question was rather a demand than a request. There was scarcely one among the vast audience who would not have felt the sparkle gone from this strong black wine of sport they had come to sip, if Ralph Stanton had been withdrawn from the twenty-four-hour contest. He had not only fame as a skilful and scientific racer; he had the reputation of being the most spectacularly reckless driver in America, whose death could be but a question of time and whose record of accidents and victories verged on the appalling. He knew his value as an attraction, and the starter knew it, although preserving impassivity.

"Five minutes," the official conceded, and drew out his watch.

Already a stream of men were running toward the Mercury camp with the news. Stanton sprang into his machine, deftly sent it forward out of the line, and shot around into the entrance to the huge oval field edged by the beach track; a mile of white ribbon bordering a green meadow.

The row of electric-lighted tents, each numbered and named for its own racing car, was in a turmoil of excitement. But most agitated was the group before the tent marked "9, Mercury."

"Durand's down and out—give me another man," called Stanton, halting his noisy, flaming car. "Quick, you—"

But no one stepped forward from the cluster of factory men and mechanics. Only the assistant manager of the Mercury company responded to the demand:

"Yes, go; one of you boys. I'll make it right with you. You, Jones."

"I'm married, sir," refused Jones stoutly.

"Well, you then, Walters. Good heavens, man! what do you mean?"

For the burly Walters backed away, actually pale.

"I'll dig potatoes, first, sir."

"Why, you used to race?"

"Not with Stanton, sir."

There was a low murmur of approval among his mates, and a drawing together for support. Stanton stepped down from his car, snatching off his mask to show a dark, strong face grim with anger and contempt.

"You wretched, backboneless cowards!" he hurled at them, his blue-black eyes flashing over the group. "Do you know what I and the company stand to lose if I'm disqualified for lack of one of you jellyfish to sit beside me and pump oil? Isn't there a man in the camp? I'll give fifty dollars myself to the one who goes, a hundred if I win."

"I'll promise twice that," eagerly supplemented Green, the assistant manager. He had private bets on Stanton.

Not one of the clustered workmen moved.

"Damn you!" pronounced the driver, bitterly and comprehensively. "I'll repeat that offer to the man who will go for the first three hours only, and meanwhile we'll send to New York and find a red-blooded male."

The men looked at one another, but shook their heads.

"No? You won't? You work your miserable bodies three months to earn what I offer for three hours. What's the matter with you, don't I risk my neck?" He turned, sending his powerful voice ringing down the line.

"Here, hunt the paddock, all of you—two hundred dollars for a man to ride the next three hours with me!"

"He won't trick me," said Stanton.

The crowded stands were a bulk of awing, seething impatience. The paddock was in an uproar, the Mercury camp the center of interest. But no volunteers answered the call. The panting machine, its hood wrapped in jets of violet flame, headlights and tail-lights shedding vivid illumination around the figure of its baffled master, quivered with impotent life and strength. Raging, Stanton stood, watch in hand, his face a set study in scorn.

Suddenly the harsh rasp of the official klaxon soared above the hubbub, warning, summoning.

"Four minutes," panted the despairing assistant manager. "Stanton—"

Some one was running toward them, some one for whom a lane was opened by the spectators from other camps who had congregated.

"Get aboard," called ahead a fresh young voice. "Get aboard; I'll go."

"Thank Heaven for a man!" snarled Stanton, as the runner dashed up. "Why, it's a boy!"

"Floyd," Mr. Green hailed hysterically. "You'll go?"

"I'll go," assured Floyd, and faced the driver; a slim, youthful figure in a mechanic's blue overalls, his sleeves rolled to the elbows and leaving bare his slender arms; his head, covered like a girl's with soft closely cropped curling brown hair, tilted back as his steady gray eyes looked up at Stanton.

"You? You couldn't crank a taxi-cab," flung the racer, brutal with disappointment and wrath. "You'd go? A boy?"

"I'm as old as the driver of the Singer car, and scant five years younger than you—I'm twenty-one," flashed the retort. "And I know all there is about gasoline cars. I guess you're big enough to crank your own motor aren't you, if I can't? You've got thirty seconds left; do you want me?"

Met on his own tone, Stanton gasped, then caught his mask from the man who held it.

"Why don't you get on your clothes?" he demanded savagely. "Are you going to race like that? Jump, you useless cowards there—can't you pass him his things? Telephone the stand that I'm coming, some one."

There was a wild scurry of preparation, the telephone bell flung madly.

"Jes Floyd is one of our new factory men," hurried Mr. Green, in breathless explanation, as Stanton took his seat.

"He's a gas-engine wonder—he knows them like a clock—he tuned up this car you've got, this morning."

The klaxon brayed again. A trim apparition in racing costume darted from the tent to swing into the narrow seat beside the driver, and Stanton's car leaped for the paddock exit with a roar answered by the deafening roar of welcome from the spectators.

"Seven minutes," snapped the starter, as the Mercury wheeled in line. Stanton shrugged his shoulders with supreme indifference, perfectly aware of his security, since the start had not been made. But his mechanic leaned forward with a little gurgle of irresistible, snatched laughter.

"Don't worry," he brought. "Really, we'll get in seven minutes ahead."

His mocking young voice carried above the terrific din of the eleven huge machines, and Stanton turned upon him, amazed and irritated at the audacity. The starter also stared, just as a flashlight flared up and showed fully the young gray eyes dancing behind the goggles, the red young mouth smiling below the mask, the shining young curls which the cap failed to cover. He stared, then slowly relaxed into a smile, and went forward.

"The talking done while I'm up, is done by me," stated Stanton forcibly. "Remember."

"Don't you ever need a rest?" queried Floyd.

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Stanton Stood, Watch in Hand, His Face a Set Study in Scorn.

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trained glance went to sweep his opponents, gauging their relative positions, their probable order on the first turn, and his own best move. The successive flashlights on either side were blinding, the atmosphere was suffocating with the exhaust gasoline and acetylene fumes. It was as familiar to him as the odor of sawdust to the circus dweller, as the strong salt wind to a habitant of the coast; the unusual element lay in the boy beside him. Man, he refused to acknowledge him.

The sharp crack of a pistol, the fall of a flag, and the whole struggling, flaming flock sprang forward toward the first turn, wheel to wheel in death-edged contest. And Stanton forgot his mechanic.

The Mercury led the first circuit, as usual. It was very fast, and its pilot took the chances more prudent drivers avoided. Still, the lead was less than the car's own length, two of its closest rivals hanging at its flanks, when they passed the tumultuous grandstand. Just ahead lay again the "death curve."

There was a swift movement beside Stanton, the pendent linen streamers floating from his cap were deftly seized and the dust swept from his goggles with a practiced rapidity.

"Car on each side an' one trying to pass," the clear voice pierced the bearing. "No room next the fence."

Stanton grunted. The boy knew how to rise in a speeding machine, then, and how to take care of his driver, he noted. Nevertheless, he meant to take that fence side.

And he did. As the other drivers shut off power to take the dangerous bend more slowly, Stanton shot forward at unchanged speed, cut in ahead and swept first around the turn, taking the inside curve. The spectators rose with a universal cry of consternation; the Mercury swerved, almost facing the infield fence, skidding appallingly and lurching drunkenly on two wheels, then righted itself under the steering-wheel in the master's hands, and rushed on, leading by a hundred feet.

The people cheered frantically, the band crashed into raucous music. Stanton's mechanic got up to lean over the back of the flying car and feel the rear casings.

"You're tryin' to tires," he imparted, his accents close to the driver's ear.

That was the first time that Stanton noticed that Floyd lisped and blurred his final "t" in moments of excitement. It might have sounded effeminate, if the voice had not been without a tremor. As it was—

At the end of the first hour, the bulletin boards showed the Mercury five laps ahead of its nearest rival. And then Floyd spoke again to his driver.

"What?" Stanton questioned, above the noise of the motor.

"We've got to run in; I'm afraid of the rear inside shoe. It won't stand another skid like the last."

Stanton's mouth shut in a hard line.

"I will not," he stated. "Get back in your place. You can't tell."

"I can."

Stanton deigned no reply, sliding past one of the slower cars on the back stretch. To go in meant to lose the whole time gained. As they took the back turn, Floyd again leaned over.

"Goin' to throw away the race an' wreck your machine, for foolhardiness?" he inquired. "That's just like you, Ralph Stanton. You'll risk a blow-out an' a smash to save five minutes in a twenty-four hour race. You can drive, but you won't use common sense."

Something snapped under Stanton's mask. Raging with silent fury, he slowed down his car and swung into the paddock gate as they came opposite it, thundering through to his own camp.

"Fix that tire," he commanded, as the swarm of mechanics surrounded them, and descended from his seat to confront the assistant manager. "Have you got me another mechanic, yet? This one won't do."

"Why, no," Mr. Green deprecated. "The driver who alternates with you wants to keep his mechanic; besides, the man isn't exactly ready to go with you, and he couldn't do both shifts, anyhow. I've telephoned to the company to find a man and rush him here. What?" he looked toward the group around the car, where Floyd's bronze head shone in the electric light as he directed proceedings.

"What's the matter with this one? Scared?"

"No," conceded Stanton, grudgingly just. "Innocent and interfering."

"Well, if that is all—"

To be continued.

## Hair Falling?

You certainly cannot lose your hair and keep it, too. Which shall it be? Lose? Then do nothing. Keep? Then use Ayer's Hair Vigor. That is about all there is to it. Ayer's Hair Vigor is also a splendid hair-dressing and hair tonic. It keeps the hair soft, smooth and greatly promotes its growth. It does not dry the hair. Consult your doctor freely. Doctors are studying these hair questions much more than in former days.

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## FROM OUR EXCHANGES

MIAMI

During the shower last Monday morning lightning struck the residence of John T. Vaughan, south of town, following the telephone wires into the house. The phone was knocked from the wall and slight damage done to the house. Probably \$10.00 will cover the damage. —During the rain on Friday afternoon lightning struck the barn on the farm occupied by Sam Utz's sons near Sharon and it was burned. One hundred twenty-five barrels of corn were burned with the barn. —Mr. and Mrs. W. A. S. Hyland of Norton, passed through town Monday returning from a birthday celebration at the home of F. A. Audsley, sr., in Carroll county. Mr. Audsley was 77 years old Sunday. They spent a few minutes with the family of their nephew, P. G. Sullivan, and then hastened on, as it was necessary for them to go to Salt Springs, where Mr. Elyand's brother is seriously ill. —News.

### Could Shout for Joy

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart," wrote C. B. Rader, of Lewisburg, W. Va., "for the wonderful double benefit I got from Electric Bitters, in curing me of both a severe case of stomach trouble and of rheumatism, from which I had been an almost helpless sufferer for ten years. It suited my case as though made just for me." For dyspepsia, indigestion, jaundice, and to rid the system of kidney poisons that cause rheumatism, Electric Bitters have no equal. Try them. Every bottle is guaranteed to satisfy. Only 50c at P. H. Franklin's Drug Store.

GILLIAM

Gilliam's new station is about completed and certainly is a credit to the city, and the C. & A. management deserves to be commended for giving our people such a handsome well arranged depot. The building is of veneered brick and concrete with a waiting room twenty feet square. Commodious office finished in oak and frescoed in green and gold. Gilliam can well be proud of the structure.

—Lon Cott's barn was struck by lightning Monday night and a valuable horse was killed. —Born to Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Deis Friday, May 15, a son. —Cliver Dickman's house was struck by lightning Monday night. His wife was slightly stunned by the shock. —C. H. O. Leimbrock and family will leave Sunday for an extended trip through the North-western states and Canada. It has been rumored that if Mr. Leimbrock is favorably impressed with the country that he may decide to locate there permanently. In any case we would regret to lose this family from our city. —Globe.

### Famous Stage Beauties

look with horror on Skin Eruptions, Blisters, Sores or Pimples. They don't have them, nor will any one, who uses Bucklen's Arnica Salve. It glorifies the face. Eczema or Salt Rheum vanish before it. It cures sore lips, chapped hands, chubblains; heals burns, cuts and bruises. Unequaled for piles. Only 25 cents at P. H. Franklin's Drug Store.

SLATER

C. H. O. Leimbrock and family and William Land, of Gilliam, left this week for a tour of the Pacific coast country. Mr. Land will probably spend the summer.

William Luzon, printer at the News office, is the proud parent of a fine eight-pound boy which arrived at their home Wednesday morning. If the general appearance of the paper is not as usual the advertisements upside down and matters mixed up generally, why please excuse it, for the first born and a boy at that, is calculated to put one beside himself for a day or two. Mother and babe are both doing nicely. —Geo. W. Markwell returned on Monday night from Mexico and Louisiana where he attended the Federal Veterans Memorial exercises. —Jim Lewis, copper smith at the roundhouse, had a very painful accident Tuesday when a quantity of hot metal blew into his face and eyes. The accident is not thought to be a serious one but will necessitate his laying off for sometime. —News.

## Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

### Children Cry for Fletcher's

# CASTORIA

The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over 30 years, has borne the signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. Allow no one to deceive you in this. All Counterfeits, Imitations and "Just-as-good" are but experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment.

## What is CASTORIA

Castoria is a harmless substitute for Castor Oil, Paregoric, Drops and Soothing Syrups. It is pleasant. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. Its age is its guarantee. It destroys Worms and allays Feverishness. For more than thirty years it has been in constant use for the relief of Constipation, Flatulency, Wind Colic, all Teething Troubles and Diarrhoea. It regulates the Stomach and Bowels, assimilates the Food, giving healthy and natural sleep. The Children's Panacea—The Mother's Friend.

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Your overhauling is due. Your nerves are frazzled. Your sleep brings no rest. Your appetite is an insult to the cook and your digestion is a loafer. You're run down. And why not? How long do you think blood and flesh will submit to the pounding you've given yourself for the last year?

Go out to Colorado and let the hills take you in hand. Take a daily bath in the mountain air, forget your worries and hurries and play for a month. Come back with man power like horse power and make the next eleven months count for twenty-four. It's cheap to get a man who can work like two at the cost of a month's rest. And the round trip fares are low enough for any pocketbook.

Any way of going to Colorado is a good way, because it gets you to Colorado. But the best service is via the

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—every day to Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo—

"The Rocky Mountain Limited" daily from Chicago and Omaha and "The Colorado Flyer" daily from St. Louis and Kansas City, are electric-lighted trains of perfect comfort. A delightfully picturesque ride. Just a night on the way. Modern Pullmans, dining and observation cars.

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These and other fast daily trains make the "going" to Colorado, Yellowstone Park and the Pacific Coast a part of your vacation. Let me send you our booklets, "Under the Turquoise Sky," and "Little Journeys in Colorado," and help you plan the best vacation of your life.



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Topeka, Kansas

of Sedalia. This is a new summer resort lately established by J. H. Bothwell, a prominent lawyer and a Republican politician of Sedalia. It consists of 2 large springs at the foot of a cliff from which a stair of 180 feet leads to the top of the cliff. An engine is used to pump the water to the top. A large three story building stands over a cave equivalent to four stories and other attractive natural features make it a fascinating place for the recreation seeker. —Record.

### Foils a Foul Plot

When a shameful plot exists between liver and bowels to cause distress by refusing to act, take Dr. King's New Life Pills, and end such abuse of your system. They gently compel right action of stomach, liver and bowels, and restore your health and all good feelings. Price 25 cents at P. H. Franklin's, Druggist.

NELSON

Milt Joplin of near Elk Lick was here Wednesday driving a oxen to a wagon. The oxen were great curiosities to the town people especially the children. Mr. Joplin has been using oxen for his work all most all his life. —A party of young folks of the vicinity of Postal spent Sunday at Bothwell's lodge about 10 miles north

SLATER

The lightning has been hitting in and around Slater the past week causing considerable loss

On Friday of last week the barn of Samuel Oots was struck and burned, and on Monday Samuel Black lost a steer and his neighbor, Henry Leimbuehler, lost a cow. Samuel Oots sustained a considerable loss. In addition to the building which was 33x15 feet he is reported to have lost 120 barrels of corn, six tons of hay, a lot of harness and farm implements. There was an insurance on the barn and contents of \$700. —A tramp giving his name as Frank Colville, appropriated a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles belonging to Mrs. E. B. Casady, of Hotel Salina, Wednesday. He was arrested by City Marshal Butts in the afternoon and taken to the county jail at Marshall on charge of larceny. —Rustler.

### Barn Burned

Monday morning about seven o'clock, Flave C. Neale's barn was struck by lightning and burned. He saved a good many things from the barn, but not all its contents. There was no stock in the barn except a hog which burned. He had \$100 insurance on the barn which will not cover the loss.

Flave is congratulating himself on the fact that he was not in the barn when it was struck. He had started to the barn to do his milking and would have been inside if Harry Herndon had not stopped him and called him to the road to talk to him. —Blackburn